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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/978,188	10/15/2001	Avi J. Ashkenazi	GNE.2630PIC8	5212

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EXAMINER

O HARA, EILEEN B

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1646

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/978,188	Applicant(s) ASHKENAZI ET AL.	
	Examiner Eileen B. O'Hara	Art Unit 1646	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 June 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 63-66 and 68-70 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 63-66 and 68-70 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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Claims

Withdrawal of Finality

1. Upon further consideration, the finality of the last office action is withdrawn.

Claims Status

2. Claims 63-66 and 68-70 are pending in the instant application. Claims 58-62 have been canceled as requested by Applicant in the Paper filed June 14, 2007.

Withdrawn Rejections

3. The rejection of claims under 112 § 1 for lack of written description is withdrawn in view of Applicants' amendment.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101 and § 112

35 U.S.C. 101 and 112, first paragraphs read as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

4. Upon further consideration, claims 63-66 and 68-70 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 and 112, first paragraph, because the claimed invention is not supported by either a specific and substantial asserted utility or a well established utility, for reasons of record in the previous office actions, mailed May 19, 2004, and February 8, 2005, July 28, 2005, Feb. 10, 2006, October 10 2007 and below.

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Claims 63-66 and 68-70 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph.

Specifically, since the claimed invention is not supported by either a credible, specific and substantial asserted utility or a well established utility for the reasons set forth above, one skilled in the art clearly would not know how to use the claimed invention.

Applicant relies on the gene amplification data for the gene encoding PRO274 polypeptide for patentable utility of the PRO274 polypeptide. The gene amplification assay provides a patentable utility for the PRO274 nucleic acid. However, the instant application has claims directed to PRO274 protein. The Polakis and Scott declarations submitted previously, that changes in level of mRNA correlates with changes in protein abundance, have been found persuasive by the Examiner. Therefore, the only issue remaining is whether gene amplification correlates with increased transcription and mRNA levels. The art establishes that there is no strong correlation between gene amplification and increased mRNA. Indeed, given the disclosure in the art, such as Pennica et al., Godbout et al. and Li et al., of record, that there is not always such a correlation, the skilled artisan would not assume it is so, but would perform the experiment to verify it.

Li et al., *Oncogene*, Vol. 25, pages 2628-2635, 2006. Li et al. used a functional approach that integrated simultaneous genomic and transcript microarray, proteomics, and tissue microarray analyses to directly identify putative oncogenes in lung adenocarcinoma. On page 2633, right column, Li et al. state: *"In our study, 68.8% of the genes showing over-representation in the genome did not show elevated transcript levels, implying that at least some of these genes are 'passenger' genes that are concurrently amplified because of their location with*

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respect to amplicons but *lack biological relevance in terms of the development of lung adenocarcinoma.*"

A slight amplification of a gene does not necessarily mean overexpression in a cancer tissue, but can merely be an indication that the cancer tissue is aneuploid. The preliminary data were not supported by analysis of mRNA or protein expression, for example. Also, the literature reports that it does not necessarily follow that an increase in gene copy number results in increased gene expression and increased polypeptide expression, such that the claimed polypeptides would be useful for diagnosis of cancer or as a drug target. For example, Pennica et al. (1998, PNAS USA 95:14717-14722) disclose that:

"An analysis of WISP-1 gene amplification and expression in human colon tumors showed a correlation between DNA amplification and overexpression, whereas overexpression of WISP-3 RNA was seen in the absence of DNA amplification. In contrast, WISP-2 DNA was amplified in the colon tumors, but its mRNA expression was significantly reduced in the majority of tumors compared with the expression in normal colonic mucosa from the same patient."

See p. 14722, second paragraph of left column; pp. 14720-14721, "Amplification and Aberrant Expression of WISPs in Human Colon Tumors." Therefore, data pertaining to PRO274 nucleic acids do not necessarily indicate anything significant regarding the claimed PRO274 polypeptides. Thus, the data do not support the implicit assertion that PRO274 can be used as a cancer diagnostic. Significant further research would have been required of the skilled artisan to determine whether PRO274 is overexpressed in any cancer to the extent that it could be used as a cancer diagnostic, and thus the implicitly asserted utility is not substantial.

The abstract of Godbout teaches “The DEAD box gene, DDX1, is a putative RNA helicase that is co-amplified with MYCN in a subset of retinoblastoma (RB) and neuroblastoma (NB) tumors and cell lines. Although gene amplification usually involves hundreds to thousands of kilobase pairs of DNA, a number of studies suggest that co-amplified genes are only overexpressed if they provide a selective advantage to the cells in which they are amplified.” The protein encoded by the DDX gene *had been characterized* as being a putative RNA helicase, a type of enzyme that *would be expected to confer a selective advantage* to the cells in which it (the DDX gene) was amplified. On page 21167, right column, first full paragraph, Godbout et al. state “*It is generally accepted that co-amplified genes are not over-expressed unless they provide a selective growth advantage to the cell* (48, 49). For example, although ERBA is closely linked to ERBB2 in breast cancer and both genes are commonly amplified in these tumors, ERBA is not overexpressed (48). Similarly, three genes mapping to 12q13-14 (CDK4, SAS and MDM2) are overexpressed in a high percentage of malignant gliomas showing amplification of this chromosomal region, while other genes mapping to this region (GADD153, GL1, and A2MR) are rarely overexpressed in gene-amplified malignant gliomas (50, 51). The first three genes are probably the main targets of the amplification process, while the latter three genes are probably incidentally included in the amplicons.”

On the contrary, there is no structure/function analysis in the specification regarding the putative protein encoded by the PRO274 gene. It is not disclosed, and based upon the sequence searches in this case, the Examiner can not find any reason to suspect, that the protein encoded by the PRO274 gene would confer any selective advantage on a cell expressing it. It has no known homology to an RNA helicase or any other protein that would be expected to confer a

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selective advantage to a tumor cell. Further, it cannot be determined from the abstract whether the level of genomic amplification of the DDX1 gene was comparable to that disclosed for PRO274.

See also Konopka (Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. (1986) 83:4049-4052), who state that "Protein expression is not related to amplification of the abl gene but to variation in the level of bcr-abl mRNA produced from a single Ph1 template" (see abstract).

In summary, it is clear that amplification of the genome more often than not does not result in increased mRNA expression.

Therefore, the Examiner maintains that Applicant's measurement of an increase of PRO274 genomic DNA does not support increased mRNA expression. Therefore, the specification and cited references do not provide a specific and substantial utility for the encoded protein. Further research needs to be done to determine whether the purported increase in PRO274 DNA supports a role for the peptide in the cancerous tissue; such a role has not been suggested by the instant disclosure. Such further research requirements make it clear that the asserted utility is not yet in currently available form, i.e., it is not substantial. This further experimentation is part of the act of invention and until it has been undertaken, Applicant's claimed invention is incomplete. As discussed in *Brenner v. Manson*, (1966, 383 U.S. 519, 148 USPQ 689), the court held that:

"The basic quid pro quo contemplated by the Constitution and the Congress for granting a patent monopoly is the benefit derived by the public from an invention with substantial utility", "[u]nless and until a process is refined and developed to this point-where specific benefit exists in currently available form-there is insufficient justification for permitting an applicant to engross what may prove to be a broad field", and, "a patent is not a hunting license", "[i]t is not a reward for the search, but compensation for its successful conclusion."

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Accordingly, the specification's assertions that the PRO274 polypeptides have utility in the fields of cancer diagnostics is not substantial.

Conclusion

5. No claim is allowed.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eileen B. O'Hara, whose telephone number is (571) 272-0878. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 10:00 AM to 6:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gary Nichol can be reached at (571) 272-0835.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272-1600.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://portal.uspto.gov/external/portal/pair>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll free).

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Eileen B. O'Hara, Ph.D.

Patent Examiner

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Eileen B. O'Hara".

EILEEN B. O'HARA
PRIMARY EXAMINER